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The APH

SLATE

Winter 2003

Volume 16, Number 1

Sharing the Memory, Shaping the Dream

A Snapshot History of the American Printing House for the Blind

Contributing Writers: Mary Nelle McLennan, APH Executive Advisor to the President; Carol Tobe, Director, Callahan Museum of APH; Ann Rich, Museum Assistant; and Malcolm Turner, Web Site Coordinator

The American Printing House for the Blind began with the dream of one man, and today, 145 years later, represents the dreams of countless people. It embodies the work and commitment that has extended from the earliest leaders who worked to create a national system for producing educational materials to those working today to apply

21st century technologies to APH products and services.

Cooperative Efforts Establish APH

The story of the American Printing House for the Blind begins in 1854 when a Kentuckian, Morrison Heady, sought donations for a raised-letter printing of *Paradise Lost*. Hearing of Heady's efforts, Dempsey B.

Continued on page 14

This special issue shares the memory of APH's founding and of how, over time, it expanded to eventually become the largest organization of its kind in the world. It also shares stories of a few of the professionals who have shaped the dream of continually improving and expanding the products and services available to blind and visually impaired people. We invite you to celebrate the scores of individuals, past and present, who share the memory of our field's courage and commitment and who constantly shape the dream for the future.



Printed on
recycled paper.



Some Things Change and Some Don't

From the President

Dr. Tuck Tinsley III
APH President

The history of the American Printing House for the Blind is as much a story about people as it is about products and services.

Since 1858, when Dempsey Sherrod founded APH to print books in raised letters, our motivation has always been serving people who are blind and visually impaired. Though our product line has broadened considerably, the role APH has consistently played over the years is to identify the independent living needs of blind and visually impaired people and respond to those needs by developing useful products and services.

Thousands of individuals have contributed to fulfilling that role of service over the past 145 years. Some of them have worked within the walls of APH, others are thousands of miles away. There have been many "colorful characters" and distinguished individuals along the way, some of whom you will read about in this issue of *The APH Slate*. Many more will

forever remain anonymous. Their contributions are clearly apparent through the wide array and high quality of products and services APH offers today.

The ways in which we communicate with our extended network of supporters has changed enormously over the years. When APH began holding annual meetings back in the late 19th century, Ex Officio Trustees traveled hundreds of miles in horse-drawn carriages to discuss the needs of the population we serve. Today, professionals from far away make the trip to Louisville by plane in a couple of hours. And the discussion



Dr. Tuck Tinsley III

and cooperation continues throughout the year via telephones and emails.

One of the things that has not changed in all of these years is the extraordinary dedication of the people with whom we work. They may have chosen to work in the field of vision for vastly different reasons, but they have generally stayed because they know that their work really does make a difference in the lives of people with vision loss. Whether through transcribing braille, developing a product, fund-raising, conducting a workshop or providing support services, such as building maintenance and record-keeping, everyone who has worked with APH through the years has contributed to the independence of blind and visually impaired people.

We are indeed fortunate that the history of APH is also the story of so many talented, dedicated individuals working together toward a common goal. ♦

Tuck Tinsley Serves as Grand Marshall of Helen Keller Festival

Nancy Lacewell, APH Public Affairs Dept.

APH participated in celebrating the history of one of the vision field's most famous names, Helen Keller. APH President Tuck Tinsley had the honor of serving as Grand Marshall in the 2002 Helen

Keller Festival in Keller's birthplace, Tuscumbia, Alabama.

This annual festival attracts thousands of people from across the country to honor the life of "America's First Lady of Courage."



Tuck Tinsley visited the water pump where Helen Keller spoke her first words in Tuscumbia, Alabama.

Keller Johnson Thompson, great-great-niece of Helen Keller, says that the week-long festival honors not only Helen Keller, but "all others who have made a difference, in spite of disabilities." Ms. Thompson currently works as an ambassador for the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), the same position Helen Keller held for much of her adult life.

Keller is one of the first 32 inductees into the Hall of Fame for Leaders and Legends of the Blindness Field, a new attraction housed at APH in Louisville, Kentucky. ♦



Around the House

Biographies by Dean and Naomi Tuttle

Hall of Fame: Leaders and Legends of the Blindness Field

The Hall of Fame has been established to honor our professional colleagues of the recent and distant past. The inductees are a fascinating cross-section of vision field heroes and pioneers who not only shaped our rich history, philosophy, knowledge, and skills, but also give us insights into current and future challenges. The Hall is a project of the entire field of vision and will be housed at APH in Louisville, Kentucky.

Thirty-two legends of our field have been chosen as the first group to be inducted in the Hall of Fame. We were thrilled that nine of the ten living Legends came together in Louisville during APH Annual Meeting 2002 and made fascinating presentations about their lives and times. Following are brief summaries of the contributions these ten outstanding people have made to those who are blind or visually impaired.



Samuel C. Ashcroft

Dr. Sam Ashcroft's career on behalf of blind and visually impaired children and youth spans over fifty years in both education and research. After serving as a regular

classroom teacher where children with visual disabilities were integrated, he assumed the responsibilities as principal of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School in 1949. Among other positions, he served as founder and first Director of Educational Research, APH; Professor in the Department of Special Education, University of Maryland; and the Director of The National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped, Ohio State University. Most of his career, however, was at George Peabody College in Nashville (1957-1971, 1978-1985) where he developed and coordinated a regional program of preparation for teachers of blind and visually impaired.

Among many publications is the famous instruction book done with Henderson, Sanford and Koenig, *New Programmed Instruction in Braille* (SCALARS Publishing).



Natalie Carter Barraga

While in New York for her daughter Karen's corrective orthopedic braces, Dr. Natalie Barraga taught kindergarten for two and a half years at the New

York Institute for the Blind. When she returned to Texas, she took a position as home economics teacher at the Texas School for the Blind. In 1963, she joined the special education faculty at the University of Texas, Austin. In 1984, she retired from the University but has remained very active on the campus by teaching, researching, and advising.

Though Natalie Barraga is probably best known for her writings on low vision and visual efficiency, her heart's first love was for blind and visually impaired preschoolers and their parents. She authored, with Jane Erin, the popular text *Visual Handicaps and Learning*, (3rd Edition, 1992).

Natalie Barraga has received over 20 national and international honors and awards including AFB's Migel Medal for Outstanding Service to Blind Persons, 1994, and AER's Ambrose M. Shotwell Memorial Award for national and international service to visually impaired persons, 1984.



C. Warren Bledsoe

Warren Bledsoe was born in 1912 at the Maryland School for the Blind where his father was serving as Superintendent. After graduating from Princeton University, he attended the

Harvard course for teachers of the blind and taught at the Maryland School for the Blind until he was drafted during World War II.

Working with Richard Hoover at the Valley Forge army rehabilitation program, Bledsoe helped develop the long cane method of travel and formalized a comprehensive program of rehabilitation training. In 1947, Bledsoe was appointed by General Omar Bradley as the Coordinator of Blinded Veteran Affairs and provided leadership in establishing the blind rehabilitation center at the Hines V.A. Hospital. As a consultant on blindness in U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare in the 1960s, Bledsoe was instrumental in funding university training programs for professionals in blind rehabilitation and model programs for the delivery of formal orientation and mobility programs.

As a result of Bledsoe's leadership in creating and preserving a professional literature in the field of blindness, the C. Warren Bledsoe Publications Award was created. He was the recipient of the American Association of Workers for the Blind's Alfred Allen Award

for awareness and understanding of the problems of blindness (1977); AER's Ambrose M. Shotwell Award for national and international service to visually impaired persons (1990); and APH's Wings of Freedom Award for outstanding commitment to the advancement of rehabilitation programs for the blind (1996).



Cleo Dolan

From 1952 to 1956 Cleo Dolan served as Social Service Supervisor and then as Assistant Superintendent for the Boys Industrial School in Lancaster, Ohio. He was the

Director of State Services for the Blind from 1957 to 1958.

He then served 30 years (1958-87) as Executive Director of the Cleveland Society for the Blind. Under his dynamic and capable leadership this agency became the third largest private multi-purpose agency in the nation serving blind persons. Keeping step with the electronic age and thus opening a whole new world of employment, the Society opened the Saint Ann Foundation Electronic Training Center, the first of its kind for blind persons and the Storer Center, one of the finest computer access centers in the country for blind people.

Cleo Dolan is the distinguished recipient of the National Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (NARF) Award. He and his wife, Elinore, have two children and four grandchildren.



Eleanor E. Faye, MD

Dr. Eleanor E. Faye is the Ophthalmological Advisor to the Lighthouse Center for Education. From 1965-1993 she served as the Director of the Lighthouse

Low Vision Services. A founder and lead instructor with the Lighthouse Continuing Education Program in low vision care, Eleanor lectures at universities, hospitals and agencies for the blind and visually impaired. She is an emeritus ophthalmic surgeon with the Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital and with the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. She maintains an ophthalmic practice in New York City.

Eleanor Faye's work has been widely published. Her book, *Clinical Low Vision* (1994), went into its second edition and was praised as a "classic work" by the New England Journal of Optometry. Among many awards and honors, Dr. Faye received the first annual Pisart Vision Award from the New York Association for the Blind as well as the American Foundation for the Blind's Migel Medal for Outstanding Service to Blind Persons. In July of 1996, Eleanor Faye was awarded the International Meritorious Award for Lifetime Contribution to Low Vision by AER, the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of Blind and Visually Impaired Persons.



Ruth Kaarlela

In 1963 Dr. Ruth Kaarlela joined the faculty at Western Michigan University to initiate a Rehabilitation Teaching Program. For the next 23 years, she was

involved in offering graduate courses, refining program content to include low vision, multihandicapping conditions, gerontology, and technology, and in the latter years she served as chairperson of the Department of Blind Rehabilitation. Because of her pioneer work in the profession of rehabilitation teaching and the development of a university curriculum, she has been referred to as the "Founder of Rehabilitation Teaching."

Ruth Kaarlela was also a significant leader in the gerontology movement of the 70s and 80s. She taught the first gerontology course at Western Michigan University, which later led to the establishment of a complete gerontology degree program. She felt strongly about incorporating the principles and practices of aging into the training program for rehabilitation teachers of the blind.

In 1990 Dr. Kaarlela received the Josephine Taylor Award from AER's Division 17. In 1999 she received the Millennium Award in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the rehabilitation teaching profession. In 2001 she was awarded the Migel Medal from the AFB, in the "Professional" category.



Alice Geisler Raftary

Shortly before the birth of her eighth child, the macular degeneration that Alice Raftary first experienced in high school caused a substantial loss of vision and

she became legally blind. That event rekindled her interest from college days in the field of blindness leading her to earn a Master of Education Degree specializing in Blindness and Rehabilitation in 1967.

Alice's career as a rehabilitation teacher at the Greater Detroit Society for the Blind (Upshaw Institute for the Blind) began in 1968. Alice served in a number of capacities while at the Upshaw Institute: Rehabilitation Teacher, Supervisor of Teaching and Personal Adjustment Training, Coordinator of Rehabilitation and Social Services, and lastly, Associate Director. Her article, "Assessment of Rehabilitation Students During Initial Contact with the Teacher" published in *The Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* (November, 1977), continues to be used as a model in university rehabilitation teacher programs.

Alice is the distinguished recipient of several awards including the American Association of Workers for the Blind's "Bruce McKenzie Award" for dedication to the field of rehabilitation, 1982. She received the Charlyn Allen Award from MACRT for outstanding achievement, dedication, and leadership in the field of rehabilitation teaching, 1992.

Alice Raftary's outlook on her career in the blindness field is best summed up in her own words: "It's exciting to participate in the restoration of life styles. Helping people to progress from hopelessness to confidence and competence is a thrill and a joy."



Stanley Suterko

Stan Suterko started his professional career as a corrective therapist in physical medicine and rehabilitation at the V.A. Hospital at Hines, Illinois. With the establishment of

the Hines Blind Center in 1948 he was among the first five from the center to be prepared as orientors for veterans who were blind. He helped refine the orientation procedures and cane techniques that had been previously developed at Valley Forge Army Hospital. During the Korean War, he was given the responsibility of heading a unit at Hines that was to triple in size.

When the Western Michigan University program began in 1961, as assistant director, Stan Suterko played a key role in the establishment of the O&M curriculum, adapting the Hines program to a university course structure.

Stan Suterko's international work included conducting a year long training program in 1966 that introduced the long cane to England. During shorter visits he conducted workshops in many countries including Australia, Poland, Denmark, Germany, France, Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand. He has been called

the "St. Peter of Mobility" by the Australian Royal Guide Dog for the Blind Association. Many agree that he played a key role in spreading orientation and mobility around the world. In 1984 he retired from Western Michigan University.

He also shared his ideas through numerous articles and publications, such as chapters on life adjustment in Lowenfeld's *The Visually Handicapped Child in School*, and on orientation and mobility in the Hardy and Cull text on *Social and Rehabilitation Services for the Blind*.

Many awards have been bestowed upon Stanley for his contributions to people who are blind. He has been the recipient of the Buddy Award from the Seeing Eye, the Lawrence E. Blaha Award from AAWB, Commendation from the Central Blind Rehabilitation Center at Hines, the Alfred Allen Award, the Ambrose Shotwell Award, and had an international award named after him at the International Mobility Conference #8 in Trondheim, Norway.



Louis Viecele

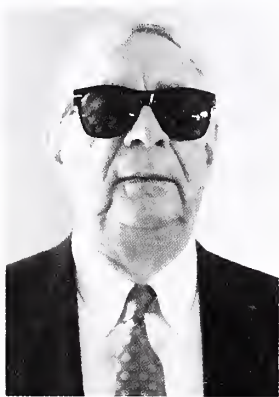
In 1948, Lou Viecele began his professional career as a rehabilitation counselor for the Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, a position he held until

1959. At that time, he was invited to join the faculty of the Rehabilitation Institute at Southern Illinois University where he served until his retirement in 1993. He is best known for the development of his Placement Counselor Training Program

for the Blind and his Small Business Enterprise Supervisor Training for Vending Stand Programs.

Lou Viecei and Thomas Dickey edited the book *Guidelines for the Selection, Training and Placement of Blind Persons in Information Service Expediting* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1975). Among a dozen chapters and articles, he co-authored with George Magers, is "Occupational Information and Job Development," in *Services to the Blind: A Community Concern* (1973).

Lou has received many honors and awards in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the rehabilitation and job placement of blind persons. Among them are: AAWB's John H. McAulay Award for outstanding achievement in the placement of blind persons, 1969; AAWB's Ambrose Shotwell Memorial Award, 1983; and the Community Service Award of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, 1985.



Donald Wedewer

During World War II, Don Wedewer served in the U.S. Army for three and one-half years. He was wounded twice, losing both legs and his vision. After the Battle of the Bulge in

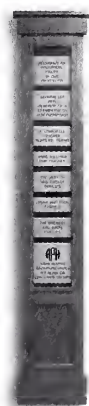
1944 he received the Purple Heart.

Don Wedewer began his career in rehabilitation in 1968 as a vocational rehabilitation counselor. He served as a statewide Placement Specialist in Florida before being promoted to

District Supervisor and then District Director in a large metropolitan area extending from Miami to Key West. In 1974 he was named Director of Florida's Division of Blind Services, where he provided outstanding leadership until his retirement in 1989.

Don Wedewer served as president of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind; Vice Chairman of Florida's Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped; President of the American Association of Workers for the Blind (AAWB); International President of AER; Vice President and Board Member of the National Blinded Veterans Association; Board of Trustees, American Foundation for the Blind.

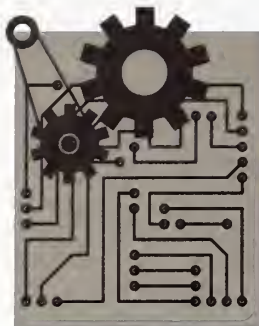
Don has received more than a dozen honors and awards including the Outstanding Blinded Veteran Achievement Award from the Blinded Veterans Association, 1970; Robert M. Grabel Memorial Award in recognition of meritorious services to the blind of Florida presented by Governor Reuben Askew, 1975; National Rehabilitation Association, Bell Greve Memorial Award, 1980 ♦



Put your own personal legend in the Hall of Fame.

Honor someone who led the way for you, or recognize a mentor, family member, or organization. Contact the APH Development Office for additional information.

502.895.2405 ext 351 • www.aph.org



APH Product Profiles

Innovations Created or Distributed by APH

Basic Science Tactile Graphics

Vacuum-formed raised-line drawings depicting objects, concepts, and relationships covered in nearly all elementary science textbooks.

The drawings are intended to supplement, not replace, a student's adapted textbook graphics. This set of graphics may offer students a different presentation or vantage point from their brailled textbook graphics. Each graphic also has a title, which textbook graphics often lack.

- Employs a variety of lines, textures, and heights; with the highest relief signifying the most important features.
- If needed, the figures on the vacuum-formed sheets can be highlighted with permanent markers for students with low vision.
- Braille labels are provided on the drawings, but self-adhesive braille labels can also be added for additional information.
- Instructional hints are offered for each tactile drawing in the set, focusing on concept presentation, potential difficulties, and reinforcing the effective need for verbal description.

Includes 52 pages of tactile diagrams, teacher's guide in large print (optional braille manual available), and a sturdy three-ring storage binder,

Basic Science Tactile Graphics Kit

1-08850-00 \$58.00

Replacement Large Print Guidebook

7-08850-00 \$7.00

Optional Braille Guidebook

5-08850-00 \$12.50

Functional Vision

A Bridge to Learning and Living: Functional Vision Assessment

Gain an understanding of low vision and the functional vision assessment process.

The *Functional Vision* video highlights the importance of assessing low vision needs and presents the basics of how such an assessment is accomplished. It features and was reviewed by nationally known experts in low vision.

Topics include definitions of legal blindness, functional vision, and visual impairment. Also covered are optical devices and their applications, as well as the components of a Low

Vision Assessment, which includes the following:

- Medical exam
- Clinical low vision evaluation
- Functional vision assessment

Finally, the video examines the Trans-disciplinary Approach to assessment, and discusses the Functional Vision Assessment Report.

Closed Captioned VHS video runs approximately 26 minutes.

Functional Vision video

1-30009-00 \$20.00

Studio Recorder

This robust software facilitates spoken word digital audio recording and editing projects, ranging from home recording to demanding professional work.

Originally created by APH to serve as an internal tool for creating direct-to-digital audio recordings, *Studio Recorder*™ contains many features that make recording, editing, and proofreading audio books easy. It is a powerful digital recording and editing software package geared specifically to making recordings



of the spoken word and includes features not found in similar programs primarily designed for music production.

Simple Operation with Extensive Features

The software supports projects ranging from the quick and simple home recording to the most demanding and professional work. Its simple, efficient operation makes it ideal for nearly anyone interested in making digital audio recordings of spoken word content.

Advanced and professional capabilities features include the ability to mark and label points in the recording, phrase detection capabilities, punch in/out recording, linear fade, and alarm tones at specified time.

Studio Recorder

D-03600-00 \$200.00

Electronic Distribution

D-03600-ED \$200.00

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Fifty Years and Going Strong for Educational Research

by Fred Otto

Ideas about the education of blind students have changed a lot over the last five decades. Recognizing the need to keep up with change led to the creation of the Educational Research Department at APH in 1952, and the department has grown over the years to meet—and lead—dramatic advances in learning opportunities for students who are blind.

Even before there was a full-fledged movement for inclusion of blind students in public schools, APH Trustees were aware that these students were being taught in a wide variety of educational settings. In light of the fact that not all students received specialized teaching at residential schools, the Trustees formed an Educational Research Committee in 1951 to consider questions about

braille readiness and braille instruction. One year later, the committee recommended hiring a full-time Research Director and chose Samuel C. Ashcroft for the position.

In the early days, Sam Ashcroft was the only staff of the Educational Research Department. The Educational Research Committee continued to make decisions on what issues to study, while a separate committee of Trustees initiated tangible materials for teaching blind students.

In 1958, new department director Carson Nolan wrote that the role of the Educational Research Department was “the description and prediction of the behavior of the blind child in the educational setting through use of scientific methods and techniques.” Federal funding throughout the 1960s and 70s supported

basic research in this vein, and many of the studies of braille reading, tactile symbols, and large type conducted in this period are still cited today as definitive references.

In time, the in-house

During APH Annual Meeting 2002, we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Department of Research. This historic photo shows five former department directors (left to right) Debbie Willis (1997-2001), Carson Nolan (1958-1976), June Morris (1977-1988), Sam Ashcroft (1953-1957), and Rob Wise (2001-2002).



staff grew and took on the main responsibility for both research and tangible materials development. Increases in funding through the Federal Quota system have allowed the department to expand with talented project leaders in specialized areas such as Early Childhood, Multiple Disabilities, Adult Life, Software, Low Vision, Testing/Assessment, and Tactile Graphics. Of course, a focus on braille reading and literacy with tactile materials still underlies much of what the Educational Research Department creates, even as it did at the start.

Averaging 13 years' experience in the Research Department, project leaders initiate many ideas for new products themselves. Many other ideas are submitted by teachers and vision professionals who have come up with creative teaching adaptations. With dozens of new products being generated each year, it's easy to see why APH President Tuck Tinsley has said "the Research Department's efforts are the backbone of the Printing House." ♦

APH Product Profiles

continued from page 11

Time for Art

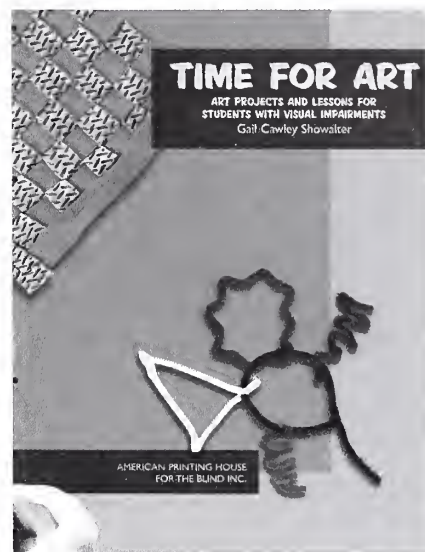
Art Projects and Lessons for Students with Visual Impairments

Too frequently it is assumed that since the visually impaired artist cannot view the completed work, he or she cannot gain pleasure from creating it. Yet, art is a process and should not be considered in terms of a finished product. When young artists are given the opportunity and are motivated, they are given the freedom of expression.

Time for Art is a handbook for teachers and parents. Information is offered on how to instruct visually impaired students in art, handle the media being explored, and points to consider in art program planning. Companion Lessons are offered for each lesson or project. Students may further explore the topic at hand for an even richer experience of "process." The lessons often explore other areas such as science, history, or mathematics.

A comprehensive list of suppliers is offered at the end of the guidebook to aid teachers and parents in finding materials for the projects offered.

Time for Art consists of a regular print guidebook and a CD-ROM. The CD contains an HTML edition of the guidebook that is accessible to visually impaired users.

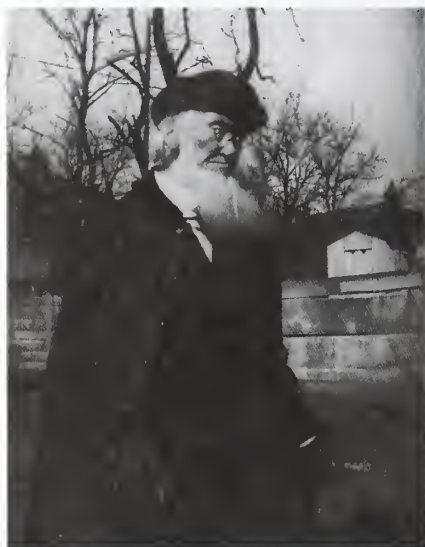


Time for Art

8-03800-00 \$15.00

Sherrod, a blind man from Mississippi, envisioned a printing house that would produce materials for blind people. He began raising money in 1856 to establish a national printing house that would produce books in raised letters. Believing in the project's value, the State of Mississippi incorporated a board of trustees to "aid the establishment of a publishing house." They decided that Louisville was the best location for this new enterprise, and in 1858, the Commonwealth of Kentucky chartered

the American Printing House for the Blind.



The story of APH begins in 1854 when Kentuckian Morrison Heady sought donations for a raised-letter printing of *Paradise Lost*.

By the end of 1860, auxiliary boards had been organized in Tennessee, Louisiana, Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio. Sherrod had secured private donations and convinced state legislatures to make appropriations. APH's first operating funds were received from private citizens in 1860; a press was ordered and plans were made to set up the fledgling operation in basement rooms of the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the Blind.

A Broken Nation Brought Broken Promises

While momentum for a central printing house for the blind grew, so did a fierce division of the nation. The Civil War erupted before APH was able to start operating. The funds promised from southern sources were never realized. APH was forced to vacate its rooms when the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the Blind was commandeered as a military hospital. Printing efforts were deterred for the five years of the war, but in 1865, the Commonwealth of Kentucky appropriated \$5 for each blind person in the state for use by the Printing House. This allocation, along with individual donations, allowed APH to begin its printing work. Its first book, *Fables and Tales for Children*, was embossed in 1866.

Landmark Legislation Establishes APH as the Central Source

By 1876, The American Printing House had earned a reputation for quality and was producing books on a regular basis. Its central location provided easy access to river and rail transportation and shipping. That year, the American Association of Instructors of the Blind (AAIB), at their meeting in Philadelphia, elected a committee to draft a Congressional bill that would provide federal funding for printing embossed books and producing apparatus for blind students. As a result of AAIB's action, An Act to Promote the Education of the Blind became law on March 3, 1879. This groundbreaking legislation, still in place

today, was our nation's first disability legislation.

The Act of 1879 established APH as the central national source of materials for blind students. It put in place a system of oversight of APH by Ex Officio Trustees from each state and territory of the U.S.

— a system still effective.

The legislation's funding dramatically increased the demand for embossed books, causing APH to soon outgrow its basement rooms at the Kentucky Institution.

With federal legislation covering printing costs, state funds were released for the purchase of land and the construction of a separate and permanent home for APH. The Board of Trustees purchased a 6.82-acre tract adjacent to the Kentucky Institution, and a lovely building was erected. It was dedicated on June 12, 1883 and remains the center of APH's current site.

In 1883, a lovely building was erected for APH's permanent home. The original structure remains the center of APH's current site, although the facade no longer exists.

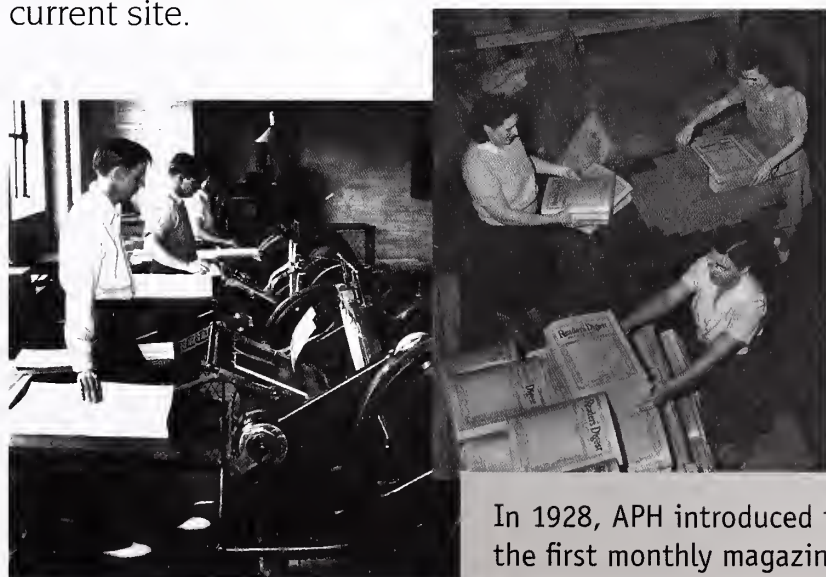


APH Increases in Scope and Size

Through the beginning of the twentieth century, the Printing House concentrated largely on producing books. Gradually, raised letters were phased out in favor of the point systems – first New York Point, then braille, then interpoint braille, which is embossed on both sides of a page. In 1928, APH introduced the braille edition

of *Reader's Digest*®, the first monthly magazine produced in braille.

Several factors in the early 1930s caused a major expansion in printing for blind people. Interpoint braille helped lower production costs of embossed books, and the adoption of Standard English



In 1928, APH introduced the braille edition of *Reader's Digest*®, the first monthly magazine produced in braille.

Braille improved efficiency because books were no longer needed in several different tactile systems. Additionally, the Pratt-Smoot Act of 1931 provided an appropriation to provide literature for adult blind readers.

In the early part of the century, there was little interest in “tangible apparatus,” and APH limited its work to basic items such as braille slates, writing guides, maps, and spelling frames. By 1930, there was an increasing demand for additional “devices and appliances.” APH added a machine shop where, in 1931, staff began to design and build new arithmetic slates, writing frames, and the Beetz Notation Graph for music.

Additional improvements came at a rapid pace. In 1936, APH established a recording studio that continues to produce a wide range of materials. In 1939, APH produced the first recorded edition of *Reader's Digest*®.

APH grew so quickly that in 1937 the trustees considered selling the 1883 building and moving to a larger one. Investigation proved that relocation was not practical, so the trustees leased a building while their present building was remodeled.



In 1931, an increased demand for additional “devices and appliances” challenged APH staff to design and build new arithmetic slates, writing frames, the Beetz Notation Graph for music (at left).



In 1936, APH established a recording studio that continues to produce a wide range of materials. In 1939, APH produced the first recorded edition of *Reader's Digest*®.

World War II challenged the APH operation. Supplies and raw materials needed for producing books, recordings, and other products were hard to obtain. Local vendors focused on the war effort. APH lost employees to military service and defense industries. Despite these problems, the work continued. Large type textbook production was introduced, and in 1948, a new factory building adjoining the original building was opened.

A Research Department Is Established

In 1952, APH established the Department of Educational Research. This led to essential research studies that have served as foundation blocks for the education of the blind as well as to the development and production of specially designed educational products. By the end of that decade, 50 educational aids were available—a healthy beginning that would become one of APH's key areas of contribution.

The demand for additional products remained high, and as early as 1952, APH was publishing 52 braille magazines. In 1955, a new office building was attached to the front of the 1883 structure. In 1959, APH began producing *Newsweek*® *Talking Magazine*, the first recorded weekly news magazine.

APH and IBM Develop Computerized Braille Translation

In 1957, APH again led the world by entering into a joint research project with IBM to apply the new science of computer technology to the production of braille. IBM® donated a 709 mainframe computer, valued at \$2.0 million, and APH staff contributed research and expertise. In the fall of 1964, computerized braille translation was fully

operational at APH, setting the stage for a revolution in braille production. During the 1960s, the largest braille project ever undertaken—the *World Book Encyclopedia*®—was completed.

Volunteer groups producing alternate media swelled in number across the country. To eliminate duplication of effort, APH established a cooperative listing known as The Central Catalog in the late 1950s. This card catalog was used nationwide to report and locate textbooks that had been transcribed into braille. It was accessed by mail correspondence or phone and soon expanded to include large print and recorded textbooks.

One of APH's key areas of contribution lies in the development of educational products in the core and expanded core curriculum areas. APH also produces independent living aids useful to older students and adults.

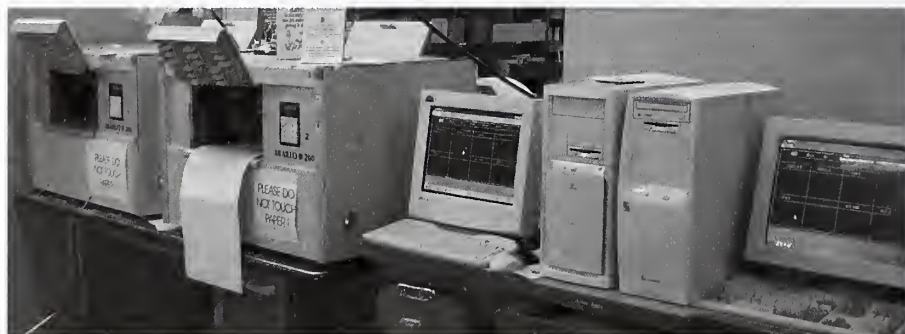


APH Grows in Response to Need

During the 1960s and 1970s, APH continued to grow to meet the needs of its customers. APH expanded its office building and began plans to enlarge its production area. The recording studio and its production facilities

were updated. The Education Research Department, which had increased in staff and scope, developed scores of educational products specially designed to meet the unique needs of visually impaired learners.

In 1980, a \$2 million addition brought the APH facility to its present size of 282,000 square feet. As the



Braillo® computerized high-capacity braille embossing machines are one of the many technological advances implemented by APH to increase production capacity and efficiency.

decade progressed, continuing efforts streamlined manufacturing techniques and upgraded equipment and technology. APH switched from producing vinyl records to flexible discs and cassette tapes, and The Talking Book edition of the *World Book Encyclopedia* was produced.

In the mid-1980s, APH commissioned individual computerized braille transcription stations that replaced the manual stereograph machines. Braille production was now largely computerized.

APH established a new department in 1988 – Educational and Advisory Services – to coordinate and support

the administration of the Federal Quota program and APH's work with its Ex Officio Trustees. This new department concentrated on representing APH to the field while serving as the voice of the field to APH. As part of Advisory Services, Customer Service was established to respond to the voice of our customers, and Resource Services

was created to lead the transition of the printed Central Catalog into an on-line database known as APH-CARL.

APH Enters a New Century

As the Twentieth Century drew to a close, tremendous advances in computer technology drove many changes in

operations and processes at APH. The Internet revolutionized communication, and APH took advantage of that technology to improve services.

The APH-CARL database was enlarged to include APH products and was renamed CARL ET AL. This allowed Ex Officio Trustees to search for products as well as place orders online. Further technological advances made the system easily available to blind customers using speech-access software. Now renamed LOUIS and available on the Internet, this database has grown to include the offerings of over 170 agencies. Anyone with Internet

access can use this free system, and students can independently find materials themselves.

Federal funding was received in Fiscal Year 1998 and 1999 to build an electronic file repository for publisher files and translated braille files to facilitate national production of accessible textbooks. The APH File Repository is available from the APH web site and has received strong support from the vision field.

The Educational Research Department had continued its work of researching and developing educational products specially designed for visually impaired learners. It boasts project staff in a range of areas and now produces 40-plus new products each year, focusing on content areas of the educational curriculum and the expanded core curriculum essential for students with visual impairment.

Continuous Improvement Leads to New Products and Services

The mission of the American Printing House for the Blind is “to promote the independence of blind and visually impaired persons by providing specialized materials, products, and services needed for education and life.” During its 145-year history, APH has pursued this mission by inviting new ideas and embracing new technologies with a spirit of cooperation and the input of its Ex Officio Trustees in the field.

The APH Annual Meeting of Ex Officio Trustees, which takes place each October in Louisville, provides a forum for sharing information—not only about what products and services are available, but also on what products and services are needed. Annual Meeting is also a place to explore new methods to improve APH.

“Therein lies the challenge of associated efforts,” says Mary Nelle McLennan, APH Executive Advisor to the President. Speaking of educational services for blind students and clients as well as the work of APH to support those services, she continued, “We should never assume that what can be done and what should be done is being done. It is our role to learn what needs to be done and to do it without reserve.” ♦



Although our methods have changed, the goal of the American Printing House for the Blind has not changed in 145 years: to help people who are blind achieve the greatest possible level of independence.



APH on the Road

Each year, APH personnel travel to many conferences and other types of events across the U.S. and around the world. They go to learn, to speak, to conduct

product exhibitions, to staff exhibits, and much more. This list highlights some of the future events where you can meet and visit with APH representatives.

March

**3-5 Focus on Success II
Conference
Pierre, SD**

**7-9 CTEVH 2003
Conference
Burlingame, CA**

**13-16 American
Society on Aging
Conference
Chicago, IL**

**18-22 CSUN Conference
Los Angeles, CA**

April

**9-12 CEC Annual
Convention
Seattle, WA**

Note: Product trademarks are of their respective companies.
This newsletter is available in braille, on disk, and at www.aph.org.



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